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Serial No.: 09/814,066

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re patent application of

Docket No. 20551/I/JR (704001AA)

F. Knauseder

Serial No.: 09/814,066

Group Art Unit: No. Unassigned

Filed: March 22, 2001

Examiner: Unassigned

For: **FLOORING PANELS**

Box: Non-final amendment

Assistant Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

Prior to initial examination of the above-identified application, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 3-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 19 and 20 as follows. A clean copy of amended claims 3-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 19 and 20 is provided in the attached separate sheet, entitled "Clean Copy of Claims."

3. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1 [or 2], wherein the grooves of the individual panels, specifically at least one of the lateral groove areas, are provided with a filling, coating, covering[,] or strand, [or the like, consisting of] comprising a latent adhesive material that becomes active after appropriate activation, and the tongues, specifically at least one of their side areas, is provided with a coating or surface impregnation, a covering[,] or strand[, or the like that,] if so desired, is applied to the panels and [ideally] moistens them shortly before they are joined together and [consists of] comprises an activator which induces adhesion.

4. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, is provided with a filling, specifically a coating, [consisting of] comprising an adhesive or glue that is stabilized by the removal of a solvent or a dispersion agent, [ideally] particularly water, but that can be reactivated upon contact with a solvent, particularly water or water moisture, and the tongues of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are provided with a film or covering that is applied or sprayed on [shortly] before the panels are joined together and that covers, or at least moistens, said tongues, or with a [comparable] surface impregnation, [consisting of] comprising a solvent or dispersing agent, particularly water, which serves as an activator for the adhesive or glue.

5. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 4] claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one their lateral areas, are provided with a filling, specifically a coating, [consisting of] comprising a dispersion glue that is stabilized by the removal of water, but that can be reactivated upon contact with a solvent, particularly water or water moisture, and particularly [consisting of] comprising a fast-binding and mounting glue on a polyvinyl acetate base[, for example, Dorus MDO 55 (manufacturer: Henkel) or of another commercially available wood glue, e.g., on a starch and/or protein base].

6. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 5] claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with an initial component, specifically with the unhardened or not fully hardened resin component of a two-component polymerization glue, and the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with the second component, specifically the hardener component, of said two-component glue, or vice versa.

7. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 6] claim 1, wherein the grooves or the tongues of the panels, in particular at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with the second component, specifically the hardener component, applied in the course of manufacturing the panels, of a two-component polymerization glue, [ideally] in [the] a form of a hardener varnish, and with a first component, specifically the resin component, which is applied to the hardener component, specifically the hardener varnish, [preferably shortly or immediately] before the panels are laid.
8. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 6 [or 7], wherein the hardener component of the two-component glue, specifically the hardener varnish, has an organic peroxide as its base and resin component to be hardened with said varnish has a methyl acrylate base.
9. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 6 [or 7], wherein the hardener component of the two-component glue, specifically the hardener varnish, has an aliphatic or cycloaliphatic polyamine as its base and its resin component is based on an epoxide and/or bisphenol A and/or bisphenol F resin.
10. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 9] claim 1, wherein at least one of the lateral areas of the groove belonging to the panels and/or at least one of their tongue lateral areas is[, or are,] provided with a coating or strand with a micro-encapsulated adhesive that is immediately active.
12. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 11] claim 1, wherein at least one of the lateral groove areas of the panels is provided with a coating or with a strand of the micro-encapsulated resin component of a two-component adhesive and at least one of the lateral tongue areas that interacts with said coated lateral groove area is provided with a coating, or film or strand, of the also micro-

encapsulated hardener component of said two-component adhesive, or vice versa.

13. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 12] claim 1, wherein at least one of the lateral groove areas and/or at least one of the lateral tongue areas is provided with a coating or a film of micro-capsules that are dispersed in a matrix of the hardener component of a two-component adhesive and that contain the resin component of the same adhesive, or of micro-capsules dispersed in a matrix of the resin component and containing the hardener component.
14. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 13] claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are covered or coated with a lastingly sticky and permanently active adhesive glue, particularly a molten adhesive glue.
16. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 14 [or 15], wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with a [lastingly] sticky and permanently active adhesive glue, particularly a molten adhesive glue[, with the commercial designation Dorus PS 534/5 and/or Dorus PS 576/6 (Henkel Company)].
17. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 16] claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their border areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their border[s] areas, are provided with an integral adhesive strand exhibiting a core strand of a lastingly sticky and permanently active adhesive glue and a polymer cladding strand that surrounds said core strand on all sides, prevents the diffusion of water or any adhesive solution or dispersion agent, and can be destroyed by the action of pressure and

shearing forces exerted when the panels are brought together, where the core strand is formed with an active adhesive or glue with setting properties that is prepared with water and/or a dispersion agent or solvent, particularly wood glue, on a synthetic polymer base, [ideally] on a polyvinyl acetate base, and/or on a biopolymer base, [ideally] on at least one of a starch and[/or] protein base.

19. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 17 [or 18], wherein the grooves, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are provided with an integral adhesive strand that exhibits a cross-section with the shape of a flattened dome.
20. (Amended) A configuration according to [one of claims 1 to 19] claim 1, wherein the coating of the grooves of the panels, specifically of at least one of their lateral areas, with an [*/adhesive? – noun missing in the German original*] adhesive that is stabilized by the removal of water but can be (re-)activated upon contact with water or water moisture exhibits a basically uniform layer thickness in the range from 0.1 to 0.4, specifically 0.15 to 0.25 mm, with thickness tolerances in the range of 0.05 mm.

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 3-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 19 and 20 are amended to delete all multiple dependencies and other minor grammatical errors and the like which have no bearing on the patentability of the presently recited claims. Attached hereto is a separate sheet entitled "Clean Copy of Claims" showing a clean copy of the amended claims. Applicant now requests initial examination of the above identified application. Applicant hereby makes a written conditional petition for extension of time, if required. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 23-1951.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew M. Calderon
Registration No. 38,093

McGuireWoods, LLP
Suite 1800
1750 Tysons Blvd.
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 712-5426

Clean Copy of Claims

The following is a clean copy of amended claims 3-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 19 and 20.



3. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves of the individual panels, specifically at least one of the lateral groove areas, are provided with a filling, coating, covering or strand, comprising a latent adhesive material that becomes active after appropriate activation, and the tongues, specifically at least one of their side areas, is provided with a coating or surface impregnation, a covering or strand if so desired, is applied to the panels and moistens them shortly before they are joined together and comprises an activator which induces adhesion.
4. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, is provided with a filling, specifically a coating, comprising an adhesive or glue that is stabilized by the removal of a solvent or a dispersion agent, particularly water, but that can be reactivated upon contact with a solvent, particularly water or water moisture, and the tongues of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are provided with a film or covering that is applied or sprayed on before the panels are joined together and that covers, or at least moistens, said tongues, or with a surface impregnation comprising a solvent or dispersing agent, particularly water, which serves as an activator for the adhesive or glue.
5. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one their lateral areas, are provided with a filling, specifically a coating, comprising a dispersion glue that is stabilized by the

removal of water, but that can be reactivated upon contact with a solvent, particularly water or water moisture, and particularly comprising a fast-binding and mounting glue on a polyvinyl acetate base.

6. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with an initial component, specifically with the unhardened or not fully hardened resin component of a two-component polymerization glue, and the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with the second component, specifically the hardener component, of said two-component glue, or vice versa.
7. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves or the tongues of the panels, in particular at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with the second component, specifically the hardener component, applied in the course of manufacturing the panels, of a two-component polymerization glue, in a form of a hardener varnish, and with a first component, specifically the resin component, which is applied to the hardener component, specifically the hardener varnish, before the panels are laid.
8. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 6, wherein the hardener component of the two-component glue, specifically the hardener varnish, has an organic peroxide as its base and resin component to be hardened with said varnish has a methyl acrylate base.
9. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 6, wherein the hardener component of the two-component glue, specifically the hardener varnish, has an aliphatic or cycloaliphatic polyamine as its base and its resin component is based on an epoxide and/or bisphenol A and/or bisphenol F resin.

10. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the lateral areas of the groove belonging to the panels and/or at least one of their tongue lateral areas is provided with a coating or strand with a micro-encapsulated adhesive that is immediately active.
12. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the lateral groove areas of the panels is provided with a coating or with a strand of the micro-encapsulated resin component of a two-component adhesive and at least one of the lateral tongue areas that interacts with said coated lateral groove area is provided with a coating, or film or strand, of the also micro-encapsulated hardener component of said two-component adhesive, or vice versa.
13. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the lateral groove areas and/or at least one of the lateral tongue areas is provided with a coating or a film of micro-capsules that are dispersed in a matrix of the hardener component of a two-component adhesive and that contain the resin component of the same adhesive, or of micro-capsules dispersed in a matrix of the resin component and containing the hardener component.
14. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are covered or coated with a lastingly sticky and permanently active adhesive glue, particularly a molten adhesive glue.
16. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 14, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are coated with a sticky and permanently active adhesive glue, particularly a molten adhesive glue.

17. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the grooves of the panels, specifically at least one of their border areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their border areas, are provided with an integral adhesive strand exhibiting a core strand of a lastingly sticky and permanently active adhesive glue and a polymer cladding strand that surrounds said core strand on all sides, prevents the diffusion of water or any adhesive solution or dispersion agent, and can be destroyed by the action of pressure and shearing forces exerted when the panels are brought together, where the core strand is formed with an active adhesive or glue with setting properties that is prepared with water and/or a dispersion agent or solvent, particularly wood glue, on a synthetic polymer base, on a polyvinyl acetate base, and/or on a biopolymer base, on at least one of a starch and protein base.

19. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 17, wherein the grooves, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, and/or the tongues, specifically at least one of their lateral areas, are provided with an integral adhesive strand that exhibits a cross-section with the shape of a flattened dome.

20. (Amended) A configuration according to claim 1, wherein the coating of the grooves of the panels, specifically of at least one of their lateral areas, with an adhesive that is stabilized by the removal of water but can be (re-)activated upon contact with water or water moisture exhibits a basically uniform layer thickness in the range from 0.1 to 0.4, specifically 0.15 to 0.25 mm, with thickness tolerances in the range of 0.05 mm.